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NIC No. 4-042

NATIONAL INDICATIONS CENTER
Room BC 956
Pentagon

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20 January 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THRU :

SUBJECT: Request for ORR Assessment

1. [] 6 January response to NIC's query re the NVN port of Quang Khe was most useful. The general problem of possibly increasing NVN/CC support for Communist forces in Laos and SVN raised by the [] reports concerning Quang Khe along with other fragments (Attachment A), however, continues to concern us. We would like to obtain an ORR assessment of (1) the possible recent expansion of facilities or significantly increased activity at certain ports in South China and North Vietnam; (2) recent improvement or expansion of land transport routes between China and NVN/Laos and within NVN.

2. More specifically, we are interested in the following:

- Any significant recent construction/expansion of port facilities (including storage) at Haiphong and Ben Thuy in NVN; at Fort Bayard (or elsewhere on the Linchow Peninsula) and on Hainan Island in South China.
- Any significant recent expansion of naval facilities on the Linchow Peninsula, Hainan Island and/or in North Vietnam.
- Any significant fluctuations since July 1963 in the numbers of Bloc vessels, particularly Chicom, calling at North Vietnamese ports.
- A more detailed look, including exploitation of latest photography, at construction and activities at Quang Khe including improvement of land transport routes in Laos and NVN connecting with this port (or connecting with Ben Thuy).
- Specifically, present estimates of progress on the rail line from Thanh Hoa southward. Is it ultimately to connect with Quang Khe?

NSA, DIA reviews completed

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- Any recent significant improvement of land transport routes between China and NVN and within NVN, particularly those feeding into Laos.
- Status of Chicom road construction into Laos.
- An assessment of the navigability of the Gianh River (Song Gianh) as far inland as Route 12.

3. We are not submitting this as a "crash" request, rather we consider it as a statement of our continuing priority interest in logistic developments in these areas. We would prefer the results of ORR's full exploitation of all available sources of current data, including photos, and are satisfied to wait whatever period may be required for this. Separate responses on each or any of the above points as they become available would be welcome.

4. Finally, we query whether ORR believes our submission of a similar request to other agencies with a response capability, e.g., ONI, DIA, CINCPAC, etc. would be useful or merely result in confusion and duplication of effort.

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Attachment
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Director

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